

IN THE CLAIMS:

The enclosed list of claims is a complete list of all claims included those that have not been amended in the present office action.

1. (currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving a call connection request message having a prefix number;
determining a corresponding IP address based on the prefix number;
assigning a label based on the corresponding IP address; and,
tunneling a request that is derived from the call request message through a
network by routing the call connection request message as well as with other
connections through [[a]] the network based on the label.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 further including:

creating an entry in a routing table containing an IP address and a set of prefix numbers associated to the IP address, the IP address being assigned to a central office that handles calls for the set of prefix numbers.

3. (original) The method of claim 2, further including:

transmitting an update message containing the IP address and the set of prefix numbers.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, where the prefix number is in a format conforming to ITU E.164, representing a set of numbers having a country code portion and a national significance portion.

5. (currently amended) An article comprising a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon, which when executed, causes:

receiving a call connection request message having a prefix number;

determining a corresponding IP address based on the prefix number;

assigning a label based on the corresponding IP address; and,

sending data from other connections to a network, the data from the other connections also tagged with the label; and,

sending a request with the label to the network so that the request can be tunneled through the network with other connections that are transported through the network with the label, the request derived from the call connection request message with the IP address and the label to a network; and,

~~sending data from other connections to the network, the data from the other connections also tagged with the label, the other connections co-existing with the call connection request message in the network.~~

6. (original) The article of claim 5, wherein the computer readable medium further having instructions stored thereon, which when executed, causes:

creating an entry in a routing table containing an IP address and a set of prefix numbers associated to the IP address, the IP address being assigned to a central office that handles calls for the set of prefix numbers.

7. (original) The article of claim 6, wherein the computer readable medium further having instructions stored thereon, which when executed, causes:

transmitting an update message containing the IP address and the set of prefix numbers.

8. (original) The article of claim 5, where the prefix number is in a format conforming to ITU E.164, representing a set of numbers having a country code portion and a national significance portion.

9. (currently amended) An apparatus for transporting data using label switching comprising:

a processor;

a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon, which when executed, cause the processor to:

receiving a call connection request message having a prefix number;
determining a corresponding IP address based on the prefix number;
assigning a label based on the corresponding IP address; and,
sending data from other connections to a network, the data from the other
connections also tagged with the label; and,

sending a request with the label to the network so that the request can be
tunneled through the network with other connections that are
transported through the network with the label, the request derived
from the call connection request message with the IP address and the
label to a network; and,

~~sending data from other connections to the network, the data from the~~
~~other connections also tagged with the label, the other connections co-~~
~~existing with the call connection request message in the network..~~

10. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, where the computer readable medium further having instructions stored thereon, which when executed, causes the processor to:

create an entry in a routing table containing an IP address and a set of prefix numbers associated to the IP address, the IP address being assigned to a central office that handles calls for the set of prefix numbers.

11. (original) The apparatus of claim 10, where the computer readable medium further having instructions stored thereon, which when executed, causes the processor to:

transmit an update message containing the IP address and the set of prefix numbers.

12. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, where the prefix number is in a format conforming to ITU E.164, representing a set of numbers having a country code portion and a national significance portion.

13. (currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

means for receiving a call connection request message having a prefix number;

means for determining a corresponding IP address based upon the prefix number;

means for assigning a label based on the corresponding IP address; and,

means for tunneling a request derived from the call connection request message through a network by routing the call connection request message as well as with other connections through [[a]] the network based on the label.

14. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising means for creating an entry in a routing table containing an IP address and a set of prefix numbers associated to the IP address, the IP address being assigned to a central office that handles calls for the set of prefix numbers.

15. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising means for transmitting an update message containing the IP address and the set of prefix numbers.

16. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising means for representing a set of numbers having a country code portion and a national significance portion when the prefix number is in a format conforming to ITU E.164.

C 17. (currently amended) A method, comprising:

receiving a call connection request message having a prefix number;
determining a corresponding IP address based upon the prefix number;
assigning an MPLS label based on the corresponding IP address; and,
sending a message having the MPLS label to a network so that a request for the call can be tunneled through the network by being transported along with data from other connections based upon the MPLS label.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 17 where the network further comprises an IP service layer and an ATM transport layer.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 where the call connection request message is an SS7 IAM message.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 where the prefix number is an ITU E.164 compatible prefix.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 17 where the call connection request message is an SS7 IAM message.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 17 where the prefix number is an ITU E.164 compatible prefix.

23. (currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

means for receiving a call connection request message having a prefix number;

means for determining a corresponding IP address based upon the prefix number;

means for assigning an MPLS label based on the corresponding IP address; and,

means for sending a message having the MPLS label to a network so that a request for the call can be tunneled through the network by being transported along with data from other connections based upon said the MPLS label.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 23 where the network further comprises an IP service layer and an ATM transport layer.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 24 where the call connection request message is an SS7 IAM message.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 24 where the prefix number is an ITU E.164 compatible prefix.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 23 where the call connection request message is an SS7 IAM message.

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 23 where the prefix number is an ITU E.164 compatible prefix.